

Sanitized - Approved For Release

A Communication

Statement on the Test-Ban Treaty

In view of recent controversy concerning the desirability of concluding a nuclear test-ban treaty with the Soviet Union, we wish to make the following statement in support of the efforts of the United States Government to conclude such a treaty as soon as it can be negotiated.

Our primary reason for support lies in the fact that a test-ban treaty is in the best interests of the United States and of world peace. A treaty would reduce the speed of the present arms race, inhibit the spread of nuclear weapons to nonnuclear powers, reduce the likelihood of nuclear war, and prevent the extension of the hazards of fallout. We therefore commend the President of the United States for his sincere attempt to reach a workable agreement with the Soviet Union on a test ban, and urge that members of the United States Congress and of the general public consider the question of the test-ban treaty in the light of scientific fact and rational argument rather than in terms of partisan politics.

Unfortunately, public debate on the issue has been confused in recent weeks by some members of Congress and by public figures who have attacked the test-ban treaty by spreading a completely false view of the test-ban situation. They also would appear to be operating on the fallacious assumption that American security can best be maintained by unlimited development of our nuclear weapons capability no matter what the other nations may be free to do in this regard. The attackers have failed to recognize the clear fact that once the overkill capabilities of the Soviet Union and the United States have reached their present level—and hardened missile bases are in place, making a successful disarming attack impossible for either side—an increase in nuclear capacity by one side or the other does not upset the balance of deterrence.

The opponents of the test-ban treaty also base their argument on the fallacious assumption that any attempt on our part to negotiate with the Soviet Union means that we are taking a soft political line and making dangerous concessions. The treaty opponents therefore consider any lowering of the number of on-site inspections by the United States simply as a sign of weakness and of yielding to the advantage of the Soviet Union, rather than as realistic negotiation to improve national security. In fact, during the period since the test-ban discussions began in 1958, detection techniques have been rapidly improving and may be expected to improve still further. It is now possible to detect many of the explosions within a given country by stations outside that country, and the number of on-site inspections required for checking the identification of earthquakes versus explosions has been greatly reduced. Research has also shown that there are many fewer earthquakes in the Soviet Union than was formerly thought, thus making a reduction in the possibility of their being confused with nuclear tests.

Deterrence Remains

Even though we probably possess between three and

ban policy of the Eisenhower and Kennedy Administrations "has already confirmed our nuclear superiority over the Soviets."

Misstatement Charged

In making this claim, Senator Dodd is completely misstating the facts as set forth by responsible Department of Defense officials. If the Soviets learned more than we did in the 1961-62 testing and narrowed the gap between us, it was because they had more to learn.

There is every reason to believe that they would have narrowed the gap even more rapidly had there not been a moratorium and had there been continuous testing on both sides after 1958. Conversely, if we had been able to conclude a test-ban treaty in 1959, the Russian tests of 1961-62 would not have taken place and we would still have our great superiority of nuclear weapons technology. By no stretch of the imagination could these tests have been carried out secretly underground.

The direct advantages to the United States of a test-ban treaty are these:

1. Dependable assurance that no atmospheric testing, which is the really important kind, is taking place.

2. Reasonable assurance that underground testing of small nuclear weapons is not taking place.

What assurance do we have that in the event of a test-ban treaty the Soviet Union would not conduct secret underground tests?

Even though a single small test might be concealed by being confused with an earthquake if he test were conducted in a region of frequent earthquake occurrences, any significant series of tests would be almost impossible to conceal.

Risk Is Emphasized

It is extremely unlikely that the Soviet Union would be willing to risk the breakdown of the treaty for the marginal gain they might achieve by testing explosions small enough to escape detection. It is important to recall that American nuclear weapons experts insist that underground testing of little value for military purposes when, in 1961, testing was temporarily suspended to underground testing.

We have no doubt that the Soviet Union is a

should suspicious indications of underground testing be discovered by the detection system of the United States and the United Kingdom, and is willing to permit a number of automatic seismic stations on Soviet territory.

The Soviets surprised us by starting big atmospheric tests in 1961 when we thought at that time they would continue negotiations for a test-ban treaty. The opponents of a present treaty now claim that this means the Soviets broke a test-ban agreement in 1961. On this basis they warn against entering another agreement. It is too often forgotten that there was no test-ban agreement (much less a treaty) in 1961, and that President Eisenhower on Dec. 29, 1959, terminated the one-year informal moratorium by announcing, "The voluntary moratorium on testing will expire on Dec. 31." Even though the Soviets and most other nations have broken treaties, a test-ban treaty would be very different from a mere cessation of tests, particularly if adhered to by an increasing number of nations, because it would be in the interest of the United States and the Soviet Union to abide by it. To be on the safe side, our developments and preparations would continue as far as possible without testing, and there should be no doubt that American testing would be resumed if the Soviets should break the treaty by again resuming tests in the atmosphere.

Even if the treaty should be abrogated after a time or should fail to develop into a world test ban because of the recalcitrance of France or